



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Re Patent Application of

Hans NUSSKERN et al

Appln No.: 09/743,738

Confirmation No.: 7535

Filed: January 16, 2001

For: MECHANICAL CONNECTING
ELEMENT

Art Unit: 3679

Examiner: Ernesto Garcia

Atty. Docket No.: 39129-183650

Customer No.



26694

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

17/44123 in
EP
44123

Request for Approval of Corrected Drawings

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

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Responsive to the indication on the Advisory Action mailed March 26, 2003 that the revised drawings filed March 12, 2003 are not in compliance with 37 C.F.R. 1.84(p)(4), Applicants respectfully disagree. However, in order to facilitate prosecution of the instant application, drawing corrections to Figures 12-33 are proposed. The Examiner is requested to approve these changes in the next Office Action issued in connection with this application.

Upon approval of the proposed drawing corrections, Applicants will make the necessary changes to the text of the specification.

As explained on page 13, line 12 through page 14, line 16 of the March 12, 2003 Amendment and Reply After Final Rejection, reference characters 10, 10' and 10" have been used to designate a round sleeve and an oval sleeve, because "the same part of an invention must always be designated by the same reference character" (37 C.F.R. 1.84(p)(4)). That is, reference character 10 denotes a sleeve in its relaxed state in Figure 12 (a round sleeve), and the same

sleeve 10 in its pretensioned state (which has an oval shape) in Figure 13 and a partially-relaxed state (which also has an oval shape) in Figure 14. The same part of the invention is shown in Figures 12, 13 and 14; the only difference is the state of the sleeve (no structural difference as a force changes the state of the sleeve).

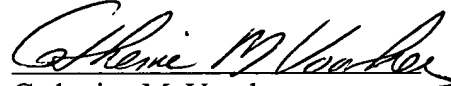
In order to clarify the 3 different states of the same part of the invention, Applicants propose to use the same reference numeral with a subscript indicating whether the state is relaxed (r), pre-tensioned (pt) or partially relaxed (pr).

With respect to Figure 25, it shows a longitudinal cross-section as to Figure 24 as clearly stated on page 9, lines 12 of the originally filed specification. Thus, Figure 25 shows sleeve 10' in the partially-relaxed state.

Applicants request the Examiner to telephone the undersigned representative if he believes additional changes need to be made.

Date: April 22, 2003

Respectfully submitted,



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